



EXHIBIT 21
DATE Jan 31, 2011
HB 11

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<http://www.medamembers.org>

MEDA represents over 230 members who are actively involved in local economic activity, community development, job retention and job creation for Montana.

January 31, 2011

TO: Chairman Walter McNutt and members of the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning

RE: Opposition to HB11 Treasure state endowment program and transfers of money to the general fund

The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) stands opposed to HB11 which would transfer Treasure State Endowment Program funds to the General Fund for the coming biennium.

The Montana Department of Commerce's research findings, along with comments from local government officials and citizens, indicate that the principal reason why so many local public facilities are deficient is that most options for correcting deficiencies in our state's infrastructure are simply not considered affordable by local residents. TSEP is a state-funded program that has been designed to help address the affordability problem by providing grants to lower the cost of constructing drinking water systems, wastewater facilities and bridges.

The affordability finding is especially true for most of Montana's communities because these facilities are very expensive to construct, the cost is usually divided among a relatively small number of users, and the community may also need to upgrade other facilities at the same time. In addition, funds are used for match that allows other grant and loan sources to be utilized for project completion that small communities must take on to meet critical needs and mandates from state and federal agencies.

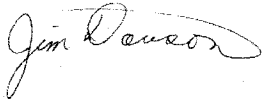
As a result of funding from the 2009 Legislative session, over 65 projects were assisted with matching funds in the amount of \$32,623,541. What is truly significant are the dollars leveraged with this investment by the State of Montana. The TSEP funding, along with other investments, were responsible for the completion of more than \$142,201,854 in projects.

Montana cannot afford to lose over \$142 million in infrastructure funding which translates into quality jobs for Montana's residents. At a time when our state is facing unacceptably high unemployment rates as the result of tough economic times now is not the time to lose such an important tool for the continued growth of Montana's economy.

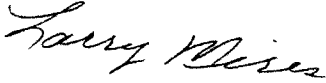
Signed,

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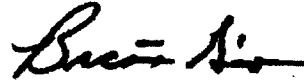
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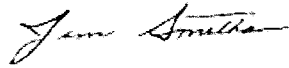
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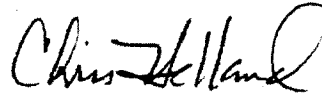
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